



HIV/AIDS HEALTH PROFILE

HIV and AIDS Estimates	
Total Population*	46.3 million (mid-2007)
Estimated Population Living with HIV/AIDS**	440,000 [255,000-640,000] (end 2007)
Adult HIV Prevalence**	1.63% (end 2007)
HIV Prevalence in Most-At-Risk Populations**	IDUs: 10% (Luhans'k), 13% (Kiev), and 89% (Kryvyi Rih) (2007) Sex Workers: 4% (Kiev), 24% (Donets'k), and 27% (Mykolayiv) (2007) MSM: 4% (Kiev) and 23% (Odesa) (2007)

*U.S. Census Bureau **UNAIDS 2008

Ukraine has one of the most severe HIV/AIDS epidemics in Europe, contributing to nearly 21 percent of the newly reported HIV diagnoses in the Europe and Eurasia (E&E) region in 2006. Ukraine's first case of HIV/AIDS was detected in 1987, and the epidemic appeared to be confined to a small population of foreign students until the mid-1990s, when a sudden and explosive epidemic emerged among injecting drug users (IDUs) in the southern and eastern regions of the country. With 1.63 percent of the adult population estimated to be HIV positive in 2007, HIV has been detected in every *oblast* (province) of the country. Kiev, the capital city, and some regions in southeastern Ukraine account for more than 70 percent of all registered HIV cases in the country. The annual number of HIV diagnoses has more than doubled since 2001 and, according to UNAIDS, reached

17,687 in 2007. UNAIDS estimated that at the end of 2007, 440,000 people in Ukraine were HIV positive and that there were 22,000 deaths in 2005 due to AIDS.

Injecting drug use accounted for 44 percent of reported HIV cases in Ukraine in 2006. A recent sentinel survey conducted in six cities found HIV prevalence rates among IDUs of 10 percent in Luhans'k, 13 percent in Kiev, and 89 percent in Kryvyi Rih. During the first six months of 2006, however, UNAIDS reported that 35 percent of new HIV infections were transmitted by heterosexual intercourse, which is not indicative of the epidemic slowing among IDUs but rather of its spread to their sexual partners. Infection rates are highest among young adults, who account for two-thirds of new infections, according to the International HIV/AIDS Alliance and the World Bank. HIV prevalence among sex workers and men who have sex with men (MSM) is a serious problem, with UNAIDS reporting in 2007 rates among sex workers of 4 percent in Kiev, 24 percent in Donets'k, and 27 percent in Mykolayiv. HIV prevalence among MSM ranges from 4 percent in Kiev to 23 percent in Odesa.

Several factors contribute to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Ukraine, including injecting drug use; high levels of migration and commercial sex; widespread stigma and discrimination against HIV-positive individuals and most-at-risk populations; growing rates of sexually transmitted infections; increasing substance abuse; stigmatization of IDUs and lack of effective treatment for them; and inadequate health care and social services. Despite a 1998 law mandating that HIV/AIDS treatment should be free, access to treatment remains poor due to limited resources. There is also low public awareness about the behaviors that increase the risk of HIV infection. According to a study in four cities reported in the 2007 UNAIDS *Epidemic Update*, only 34 percent of HIV-positive MSM reported using a condom the last time they had sex with a male partner.

Ukraine had a high rate of estimated tuberculosis (TB) incidence of 99 cases per 100,000 population in 2006, according to the World Health Organization. HIV-TB co-infection is the highest in the E&E region, with an HIV prevalence rate of 7.9 percent among adults with TB. High rates of co-infection complicate treatment and care for both diseases.

National Response

Since the early 1990s, the Government of Ukraine has made important commitments to stem the spread of the disease. In 1992, Ukraine established its National AIDS Committee to address the nascent epidemic; however, budget disputes caused the committee to be dissolved in 1998. The next year, the government created the National AIDS Control Coordinating Council under the Cabinet and mandated that every *oblast* establish an HIV prevention program. In 2001, the first national plan for combating HIV/AIDS was approved; its goals included preventing the spread of HIV, developing capacity to treat infected individuals, and providing support and counseling for HIV-positive people.



The national response to the disease was reinvigorated in 2005 with the establishment of the National Coordination Council on HIV/AIDS (NCC). In 2006, the NCC was broadened to include representatives from key sectors, including government, civil society, people living with HIV/AIDS, and donor agencies. However, because of limited funding and treatment options for IDUs as well as a gap between national policies and laws and local practices, efforts to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS have been unsuccessful thus far. Despite scaled-up HIV treatment in recent years (resulting in an increased number of people on antiretroviral therapy [ART]), the need remains for the

government to keep pace with the growing number of people requiring treatment. In particular, this scale-up requires measures to reach IDUs and members of other populations with high prevalence rates.

Ukraine's Cabinet is now in the process of drafting a national HIV/AIDS program for 2009–2013 that will include measures for conducting large-scale prevention programs and providing access to testing and treatment. The president recently created a council to address the problems of HIV/AIDS, TB, and drug addiction. Ukraine has also begun scaling up substitution therapy and harm reduction programs.

In 2004, Ukraine received a round one grant from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. In 2006, a sixth-round grant was approved for the NCC to increase prevention, treatment, and care activities for vulnerable populations. The U.S. Government provides one-third of the Global Fund's total contributions.

USAID Support

Through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Ukraine in fiscal year 2008 received \$5.45 million for essential HIV/AIDS programs and services. USAID programs in the Ukraine are implemented in partnership with the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (Emergency Plan/PEPFAR), the largest commitment ever by any nation for an international health initiative dedicated to a single disease. To date, the U.S. has committed \$18.8 billion to the fight against the global HIV/AIDS pandemic, exceeding its original commitment of \$15 billion over five years.

Reauthorized on July 30, 2008, the U.S. is continuing its commitment to global AIDS in the amount of \$39 billion for HIV/AIDS bilateral programs and contributions to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Working in partnership with host nations, the initiative will support antiretroviral treatment for at least 3 million people, prevention of 12 million new HIV infections, and care and support for 12 million people, including 5 million orphans and vulnerable children.

Initial HIV/AIDS activities by USAID/Ukraine focused on building capacity among nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to conduct HIV prevention activities. The USAID/Ukraine HIV/AIDS strategy for 2003–2008 aims to reduce transmission of the disease through the adoption, promotion, and facilitation of protective behaviors; the strengthening of partners to plan, manage, and evaluate HIV/AIDS programs; and the reduction of HIV/AIDS-related stigma and discrimination. With its 12 implementing partners, USAID focuses its HIV prevention efforts in the *oblasts* that have the country's highest HIV prevalence: Cherkassy, Crimea, Dnipropetrovs'k, Donetsk, Kherson, Kiev, Mykolayiv, and Odesa.

Recent USAID successes in Ukraine include:

- Increased marginalized groups' exposure to HIV/AIDS prevention information and services from 12 percent in 2004 to 45 percent in 2007.
- The Ukrainian Media Partnerships project leveraged \$3.84 million in resources to combat HIV/AIDS.
- An informational leaflet on HIV/AIDS was produced and distributed to more than 1 million Ukrainians in Kyiv on World AIDS Day.
- Support to more than 80 health facilities and training of more than 400 doctors and midwives in prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT) provided 45,000 pregnant women with access to quality HIV counseling and testing, as well as PMTCT services when needed.
- A national ART protocol for HIV-positive pregnant women and women in labor has been developed and adopted by the Ministry of Health.
- Support for the MAMA+ project is creating the capacity and commitment to keep children born to HIV-positive mothers in their biological families.

Important Links and Contacts

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USAID HIV/AIDS Web site for Ukraine:

http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/aids/Countries/eande/ukraine.html

For more information, see USAID's HIV/AIDS Web site: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/aids

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